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TAGS: [GR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [HR](#) [AL](#)

SUBJECT: GREECE: UPDATE ON RATIFICATION OF NATO ACCESSION
PROTOCOLS FOR CROATIA AND ALBANIA

REF: A. ZAGREB 00015
[¶](#)B. HOVENIER/HOLTZAPPLE EMAIL OF 1/13/2009

Classified By: AMBASSADOR DANIEL V. SPECKHARD. REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

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SUMMARY

[¶](#)1. (C) MFA Secretary General Agathocles told Ambassador Speckhard 1/15 that the NATO accession protocols for Croatia and Albanian are pending in Parliament and should be approved "soon." Although contacts in the MFA NATO Department and the Office of the President of the Parliament report that Agathocles was slightly ahead of himself and that the protocols have not yet been transferred from the Prime Minister's office to the Parliament, they also confirmed that the Parliament should vote on the matter in "February or early March." We do not expect the Parliament to object to the protocols. The Croatian Charge has confirmed this is her understanding as well, and is not aware of any linkage between approval of the protocols and references to "Macedonians" in Croatia's Law on Minorities (ref A). End Summary.

[¶](#)2. (C) In a 1/15 meeting, Ambassador Speckhard raised with MFA Secretary General Agathocles the status of Parliamentary approval for the NATO accession protocols for Croatia and Albania. Ambassador Speckhard emphasized our collective interest in ensuring that all Allies have completed the ratification process well in advance of the April 4 - 5 NATO Summit. Agathocles responded that the protocols were now pending "in the Parliament," adding that "we should be finished soon."

[¶](#)3. (C) A/Political Counselor separately raised the issue with Theodoros Daskarolis, the Deputy Director the MFA Department for NATO and International Security. Daskarolis confirmed that the accession protocol is "out of the ministries", and it is with the Prime Minister's office which, following Greek bureaucratic process, must formally transfer the protocols to the Parliament for approval. Daskarolis said that the protocols had already been reviewed by the Ministry of Finance which is a required step for all treaties. Daskarolis added that he expected the Prime Minister's office to forward the protocols to Parliament later this week or early next week. Finally, he said the MFA expects the protocols to be approved formally by Parliament in February or early March at the latest. A/Political Counselor also raised the issue with Alexandros Ioannidis, diplomatic advisor to the President of the Greek Parliament. Ioannidis confirmed that his office expected to receive the accession protocols from the Prime Minister's office "in the

next few days" and that the President of the Parliament intended to have them voted on in "February or early March at the latest." A/Political Counselor emphasized the importance of rapid parliamentary review of these protocols. Ioannidis added that it was the assessment of the President of the Parliament that approval of these two protocols would not/not be problematic.

¶4. (C) A/Political Counselor also spoke with the Croatian Charge Mirjana Pusic to follow up on concerns expressed to Ambassador Bradtke in Zagreb (ref A). Pusic said that it was her understanding that the accession protocols were "out of the Ministry" and "on its way to the Parliament." When asked about inferences that a reference to "Macedonians" in the Croatian law of minorities could complicate Greek approval of the accession protocols, she responded that no Greek official has raised this issue with the Croatian Embassy in Athens nor in Zagreb, and she discounted this as a problem.

SPECKHARD